

Colossians

Bible Commentary 2021

by

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The Firstborn – Colossians 1

1:1-8

Paul mentioned his co-worker in Christ. Epaphras was a minister at the church in Colossae. He brought Paul word about the church. He described the fruit of the Spirit in Colossians. Paul was encouraged to hear the good news about the Colossians. I'm not sure if Paul had a part in starting the Colossian church, but he prayed for them. He thanked God for them.

Thanksgiving for God's people is a continual exercise for all Christians. We should give thanks for God's people and pray for their edification, encouragement, and comfort. Paul thanked God for them.

Notice the emphasis Paul put on the hope of heaven. It is sadly a characteristic of the American church that men put emphasis on the here and now. We don't hear about heaven too much anymore. The apostles and the Lord Jesus focused completely on what is eternal. Their message was always about preparing for eternity. Jesus taught us to live now in preparation for eternity.

Jesus taught us to store our treasures in heaven. Why then do mega churches preach about storing up treasure on earth? It is because we are in a time of apostasy. Most of what is proclaimed from mega churches is a false gospel. Jesus warned us not to be deceived by false prophets and false Christs. Paul warned us in the last days there would be men preaching another Jesus, another gospel, and another Spirit.

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has been preached in all the world. Jesus said it would, and so it happened. Everywhere the message of Jesus Christ is preached there is spiritual fruit. People turn from living for self and the world and they turn to living for God and his kingdom. There is spiritual fruit when the gospel is preached to people.

Be diligent to keep the gospel in your heart every day. Read **1 Corinthians 15:1-4** and remember that Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures.

1:9-11

In **1 Thessalonians 5:17** Paul commanded the believers to pray without ceasing. In this letter we see Paul followed this exhortation and prayed without ceasing for the Colossians.

Unceasing prayer is not necessarily 24 hours a day, but an ongoing, daily habit of prayer. I can see where we should maintain an attitude of prayer and be ready anytime to lift up a prayer to God like Nehemiah.

He prayed for them to be filled with the knowledge of God's will. He prayed for them to have all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

There is more to being a Christian than the moment you bowed your head and prayed a sinner's prayer. We must continue in this relationship with the Lord to understand his will.

James exhorted us to pray for wisdom. If we do not understand then we can ask God for wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Why do we need to know more of God's will and have God's wisdom and spiritual understanding? There is a process of being renewed in the mind. When we are first saved our mind is still controlled by everything we grew up with in this world system. Our minds are programmed by the world system. Now we must allow our thinking to be corrected. We must allow the Lord to change the way we see life.

God's priorities are vastly different than our priorities. We cannot understand how God sees things unless God teaches us. This is what Paul was praying for. He was praying they would open their heart to learn from God and have their thinking changed. They had to put off the old way of thinking and learn to think in spiritual truth.

It takes time. It takes suffering. There is no way around it. Learning to think biblically takes more than reading the Bible. It will take a willing heart to be corrected and chastised. It will require humbling ourselves. It will require us to allow the Holy Spirit to search every thought we think, and be willing to allow the Lord to cast down our vain imaginations and thoughts.

We must aggressively cooperate with the Holy Spirit in this process. We must search the scriptures, meditate on the truth, ask questions, record the answers, and then, and here it is - Don't forget what you learn! Remind yourself of the truth. Repeat it daily. Hold fast the form of sound words. Hold on to what God gives you. Don't let it go.

The purpose of having the mind transformed is so our lives will honor God. We learn to live in a way that is pleasing to God. We learn to honor God with our words, attitudes, and actions. We learn how to obey the Holy Spirit.

As we do this our lives will bear fruit. Our lives will produce a fragrance that comes from another world. People will feel God's kingdom when they get around us.

The Holy Spirit gives his strength to our spirit. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to endure. We are called to do more than endure. We are called to patiently endure. We are called to patiently endure with joyfulness. This is not possible in human strength or determination. This is only possible by being filled everyday with the Holy Spirit.

1:12-14

There is a lot the Holy Spirit revealed in these verses. The Holy Spirit showed us what the Lord Jesus did for us through his crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. The Lord made us partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. What does this mean? It means the Lord has plans for us in eternity. There is an inheritance. For me, the Lord himself is my inheritance. I want to be with the Lord. If you read the history of the Levites the priests it is written that the Lord was their inheritance in contrast to the land inheritance which the other tribes received. The Lord himself became the inheritance of the Levites and the priests.

An inheritance is important for us to think about. The Lord exhorted in **Revelation 3:11** to hold fast what we have so that "*no man may take your crown*". That crown represents some kind of inheritance. We are to be careful about this and "hold fast". We see there is a distinction made between salvation and "*inheritance*". We must hold fast to what God gave us in order to receive inheritance. This is not a works-based salvation theology. This has to do with the judgment seat of Christ when believers receive a reward for the things done in the body, whether good or bad. This is a matter of receiving rewards or losing rewards. The Lord wants us to receive the reward he has for us. He exhorts us to "*hold fast*".

The Lord Jesus delivered us from the powers of darkness. Demons, devils, evil spirits, and Satan are real enemies. The Lord delivered us from their kingdom and power. When he did this he translated us into his kingdom. These two kingdoms are opposed to one another. There is no truce and there is never negotiation. There is never a ceasefire. This is a battle that has been going on for a long time but it will not last forever. There will be a decisive end to this battle in the future. The enemy of God will lose the battle and all those who follow him will lose.

The Lord redeemed us from sin and the enemy through his blood shed at Calvary. The Lord Jesus gave himself to redeem us. Redemption means buying something back. We were redeemed through the shed blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. Jesus paid the price for our sins. We now belong completely to him and no longer owe anything to the enemy. The accusations of the devil no longer have power over those who believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. (**1 Corinthians 15:1-4**). Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. (**Romans 10:13**).

1:15-19

Jesus told his disciples if they saw him they saw the Father. Jesus is the exact image of the invisible God. When we look at Jesus we are looking at God. Jesus Christ is God. He is the Son of God. He is

God the Son. He is the image of the invisible God. If God were to look in a mirror he would see Jesus Christ.

Jesus is called the "*firstborn*" which means he is before all things. This means he was the first man of a new race of men. This race of men receive a resurrected body like the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus calls them his brothers. He is the firstborn of many brothers. The brothers are not little gods. They are like him. They are not him. They are like him. Jesus calls them his brothers not because they are gods but because they resemble him.

Man was made in the image of God but man fell into sin. Jesus has redeemed us from the fall of man and brought us back to the heavenly Father. When we put our faith in Jesus we are born again and become like Jesus.

It is by the Lord Jesus Christ the world was created. He is God's word. By him the world was created. The world was created for the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is before all things that were ever created. Therefore, Jesus Christ is God. He was with God in the beginning, and he is himself God.

The entire universe is held together by the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything that is created is held together and consists because the Lord Jesus Christ lives.

Jesus is also the head of the body which is the church. He is the beginning, the head, and the firstborn.

There is a word for what we are describing. This word is "*preeminence*". He is the fullness of the Godhead bodily and he is over all things.

Why did Paul teach this? Because people try to drag Jesus down to their level. They try to make Jesus just another moral teacher or prophet or some kind of guru. However, Paul was clearly teaching us that Jesus Christ is greater than any man who ever lived. There is no other man who ever lived like Jesus. He is the alpha and the omega, and he is the beginning and the end of mankind.

1:20-22

Men are enemies of God because of wicked works. Men are sinners and as a result become enemies of God. However, it is God's plan for men to be reconciled. God accomplished this reconciliation through his Son Jesus Christ going to the cross and shedding his blood and dying. The Lord Jesus Christ bore the full penalty of our sins. Now, as a result of his substitution on our behalf, we can receive forgiveness of sins. God will wipe out all the sin that is against us because of the finished, completed work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This reconciliation brings peace with God. God made peace with us by the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The work of Christ allowed God to present us to himself as holy, unblameable, and unreprieveable in his sight.

This is good news. This is the gospel. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Through faith in the gospel we have peace with God. The Lord did all of the work of salvation for us. It is our part to believe what God said and trust in what God did for us.

Trusting in God touches everything in life. It is not only the forgiveness of sins, but without this foundation we could go no further. The problem of sin must be dealt with in every person's life. There is no way to get around this. Jesus is the only way we can approach God and have our sins forgiven, removed, and dealt with.

1:23-25

There is no other gospel that can save. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which Paul preached is the only saving gospel. Any other message will lead men away from God instead of toward God. There is no hope of salvation outside the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why Paul said we must continue in the faith and be completely grounded in the gospel. We must be completely settled in our faith in the gospel. There is no other way that men can find forgiveness of their sins and reconciliation with God. The gospel is that Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. (**1 Corinthians 15:1-4**).

Did Paul's sufferings add something to the gospel that was lacking? When Paul talked about his suffering he pointed to the fact that in order for him to preach the gospel he had to suffer. In order to reach people he had to deny himself. He could not live any way that his flesh wanted to live. Instead, he had to deny himself in order to obey God and the calling upon his life to preach the gospel. It is just a plain matter of fact statement that in order to preach the gospel Paul went through suffering. Anyone today who lives godly and preaches the gospel will suffer. Why? Because we live in a fallen world and there is a world system against us preaching the gospel. Jesus said in this world we will have tribulation but he overcame the world. Because Jesus overcame we also overcome by faith in him.

Paul suffered for the church which is the body of Christ. He suffered for the church because he was persecuted for preaching. He suffered from unbelievers, from religious people, and from false brethren in the church. His suffering was a result of preaching the gospel truthfully and with a clear conscience before God. All of God's prophets suffered and most died for their message and testimony.

In all his suffering Paul rejoiced. How can we rejoice while we suffer? If we suffer as a Christian we have a lot to be happy about. If we suffer as a Christian then God is happy with us.

Peter pointed this out in **1 Peter 2:19-21**, "*For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*"

False Religion – Colossians 2

2:1-3

What was this "*great conflict*" Paul talked about? Paul was in a spiritual battle for their souls. His battle was done through prayer, the word, and by communicating the truth in love to the church.

We are in a great conflict whether or not we realize it. There is a battle between the truth and the lie happening in the mind of every person in our family, coworkers, church, and in our nation. There is a conflict happening between the Lord Jesus and the enemy right now. The enemy tries to defeat the Lord by repeating lies to people through word of mouth, media, and broadcasting by air. In many ways the enemy has perfected the publishing of lies. At the same time the Lord works through the lives, prayers, and witness of believers. Christians are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. We engage the world on the basis of who we are: salt and light. We do not engage the world system on its terms of pride, lust, covetousness, and unbelief.

The Christians Paul wrote had never met Paul. They had not seen his face in the flesh. But he was in a great conflict on their behalf. This is spiritual warfare.

Paul's prayer was for their complete understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ. He wanted them to know who they were in Christ. His prayer was that their understanding would be complete and that they would be comforted by the truth. He prayed that their lives would be tied together with other Christians in the truth. When Christians walk in agreement with the gospel they are knit together. How can two walk together except they be agreed? When we agree with the gospel then we walk together. As we walk together our lives are mixed and we become united in the Lord.

There is no wisdom outside the Lord Jesus. Man's pride leads him in different directions to obtain knowledge to fill the spiritual void inside him. There is only one source to find wisdom that will satisfy. This is in the man Christ Jesus. He is the fountain of all wisdom and knowledge. He is everything we need.

Man was created to need the Lord. Our spirit craves God, but men don't know this. They spend their lives pursuing everything but the one thing they truly need. Men only need one thing. The Lord Jesus Christ.

How can I be saved? Believe the gospel! Jesus Christ died for our sins at Calvary, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures (**1 Corinthians 15:1-4**). Whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. (**Romans 10:13**).

2:4-8

We see Paul's concern for these Christians. He was afraid that it was possible for someone to "beguile" them with enticing words. Therefore he said "beware" lest any man spoil them through "philosophy"

and "vain deceit". This philosophy and vain deceit he warned about are "after the tradition of men", and "after the rudiments of the world".

There is a lot packed in these verses. It is possible for Christians who believe in the Lord to get sidetracked by the enemy. It is possible for us to be deceived by men who appear to know what they are talking about. This coincides with what Peter said in **2 Peter 2** when he told the Christians that as there were false prophets who deceived people there shall be false teachers who will deceive Christians. How is this possible? These false teachers are fake Christians. They do not follow the gospel, but instead they follow "philosophy", "vain deceit", "traditions of men", and the "rudiments of the world".

There is a lot for the Christian to avoid. Worldly philosophy is man's attempt at understanding truth and understanding God. It is based on man's understanding of the world around him, and it is not based on divine revelation which the Holy Spirit gives. It is attractive and seductive and I have had close Christian friends who were led astray by philosophy and the rudiments of the world.

What are the rudiments of the world? How does the world think? The Bible shows us how the world operates in 1 John 2. The world system is based on the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Civilization revolves around prideful men who make a name for themselves, who then gain a following. They believe by this method they ensure themselves influence and power. These men rise up to lead other men through the use of carnal power or seduce men with covetousness. This is exactly how government, business, and society operate. This is the world system. When Christians adopt this attitude within the church then you have what Paul warned of as "philosophy", "vain deceit", "traditions of men", and "rudiments of the world".

The real danger is not out there among unbelievers. The real danger is men within the church who base religion, ministry, and church life on the same principles as the world. This is what we should fear the most. These are false teachers who lead men into heresy and bring up swift destruction.

How can I be delivered from this deception? Stick to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not be a follower of men. Study the bible for yourself. Obey the word of God. Put it into practice. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ alone and do not put your faith in anyone or anything else besides the word of God.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. (**1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 10:13**).

2:9-12

Jesus Christ is God. In him is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Jesus often said that when we look at him we are looking at the Father. What does this mean? Jesus is God. The Father is God. The Holy Spirit is God. God is three persons in one God. The greatest revelation of God that man ever received was in the man Jesus Christ. Jesus was completely man and completely God. He is human and God. This is difficult to understand but it is true. We must accept by faith the revelation of God. He revealed himself to us so we can understand what He wants us to. He loves us. He loves us so much he died on the cross for us so we can be forgiven and reconciled to him.

God made man in his own image. He is intent on saving us. He will always do all that he can do to bring us back to himself.

We are complete in Christ. Everything we need for spiritual and physical life is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our past and future and present is all wrapped up in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our past is forgiven, our future is secured, and our present is provided and protected for by the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our provision and he is the goal of life. Any other provision, protection, or portion will leave us empty, hungry, open to attack, and off track with how God created the universe.

Paul used words like "circumcision" and "baptism". The religious Jew of his day understood these words better than we do today. Our takeaway from these verses is that the Lord Jesus replaced man-made religion. Jesus has a personal relationship with us as individuals. He also has a relationship with us in corporate fellowship in the church. What is the church? Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus he is there. We are the church when we gather in his name and exhort one another in scripture, and worship, and pray, and break bread together.

God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. He has also raised us up in Christ Jesus. He gave us spiritual life now and forever. Our mortal, frail body will some day be swallowed up by the eternal life we already have in our hearts. Amen.

2:13-15

The heart of what Paul was describing here was some of the things which the Lord Jesus accomplished through his crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection.

Man's position before God saved him was "dead in sins". He lived according to his intellect and did what his carnal nature told him to do. However, when we believe the gospel then God placed us into the Lord Jesus. What happened to the Lord Jesus was accounted to us as well. This goes beyond accounting, however, and is a spiritual reality we can experience in our daily lives as we abide in the truth.

Notice when Christ was raised from the dead we were also made alive. We were dead in sins but now when we put faith in Jesus we are made spiritually alive. We are given eternal life. We have spiritual life when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The word "quickened" means to make someone alive, or to raise someone from the dead.

When we are made alive we also automatically receive forgiveness of sins. Sin is related to spiritual death. If we are born again then sin no longer has dominion over us. We are no longer under the power of sin but we are now under the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus Christ now lives in our heart, in our spirit, and we are alive in him. This life of Jesus drives out all sin. Our sins are washed away in the blood of the Lamb shed on the cross of Calvary.

The ordinances which were blotted out were the religious rules the nation of Israel lived by. All the sacrificial, ceremonial, moral and religious laws in Israel pointed forward to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now that we have the Lord Jesus living in our hearts there is no need for this outward, religious tradition any longer. Those who live according to the religious traditions of men do not live by the spiritual reality of the living Christ in their hearts. Dead religion has to do with men who accommodate the Bible but still live according to the principles of the world. When men only know about Jesus or just facts about Jesus they live according to laws, rules, tradition, and outward religion. Their churches are built and maintained along the same principles on which the world system exists.

But when Jesus died on Calvary he set us free from ordinances of religion. He blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us. All dead religion is against men. If you are ever in a church controlled by dead religion you will know it if the Holy Spirit lives in you.

The Lord Jesus is for us. This is why he died for us. He came to save us from ourselves. He came to show us the reality of God in truth and not by using the shadows of outward religion. He himself is the express image of God. If you have Jesus you don't need religious traditions and ordinances any longer. You have been set free from every religious and worldly system so you can serve God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The final thing these verses point to is the reality that what Jesus did at Calvary completely defeated the powers of darkness. I don't pretend to understand all the ways in which this happened. It is true nonetheless. When the Lord Jesus died on Calvary he destroyed the power of the devil. He put the devil to an open shame.

We have the victory in our Lord Jesus Christ. We have eternal life, our sins are forgiven, we are set free from religion, and have the authority in the name of Jesus Christ to defeat the power of the devil when he attacks us. Scripture plainly says for us to submit to God and resist the devil and the devil must flee from us. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. Amen.

2:16-23

Jesus warned his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Saducees which was religious hypocrisy. This is the same exhortation we have from Paul here. Paul warned Christians to not be deceived by men who promote religious traditions, rituals, or esoteric spiritual knowledge. Paul said that those who promote religious elitism are vainly puffed by their fleshly minds. They do not have spiritual minds, even though they talk about the Bible and sound authoritative with their aggressive personalities.

Men judge you if you claim to love God but do not follow their prescribed religious traditions. Paul gave an example of "meat, or in drink, or respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of sabbath days". Right there you have most of the deception in false religion. Religious deceivers always emphasize what you can or cannot eat and they will emphasize certain days for worshipping or honoring God. These men preach a false gospel and another Christ.

The traditions in Israel were shadows which pointed to the reality of Christ Jesus our Lord. He is the fulfillment of the ten commandments, the sacrificial system, the sabbath celebrations, everything!! Men

who attempt to reintroduce any of those religious system again into the Christian church are false teachers, deceivers, and are promoting another gospel, another Christ, and another spirit.

Notice another problem people have is with angels. Religious deceivers promote angel worship, or put a lot of emphasis on angels. Listen closely to someone who is teaching. Do they talk about angels a lot? Do they describe having personal experiences with angels? Of course it is possible and probable that men will have encounters with angels but the scripture says "angels unaware..". In other words, if a man truly had an experience with an angel he would probably be unaware the person was an angel. I can only think of a few times in the Bible where men had direct confrontations with angels and knew they were angels, and these were all at very pivotal and watershed moments in the history of the human race. False teachers will always add a lot of the supernatural to their "testimony" in order to convince people they know what they are talking about and get people to follow them.

Beware of deceivers who bring another gospel than the one Paul preached. The gospel Paul preached is outlined for us in **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. (**Romans 10:13**)

Work For The Lord – Colossians 3

3:1-4

What does it mean to be risen with Christ?

The natural mind has difficulty understanding this but we can grasp it by faith. This is spiritual truth. When we believe the gospel God places us into his Son Jesus. This means when Jesus died on the cross we died with him and in him on the cross. When he was buried we were buried with him and in him. When Jesus rose from the dead on the third day we rose with him and in him. These are spiritual facts. The Bible clearly shows us this is the truth. This is the only way we can make sense of Paul's words "if ye then be risen with Christ".

If we believe in the Lord Jesus and the gospel then God places us in Christ and when Christ arose we were risen with Christ. We rose from the dead with Christ. How does this affect us in the present? It means our spirit inside us is alive. Our body is dying because of sin but our spirit is alive and will live forever with God. From God's viewpoint we are already with him because God does not experience time like we do. He sees everything from the beginning to the end in eternity. With God there is no past, present, and future but there is only the eternal now.

What is true? The only true things are those which will continue to exist after this temporary existence is done away with. What is true? Truth is only what God says is true and not what I say is true or what I think is true. The only time I say or speak anything true is when I say what God says and when I agree with what God says.

Christ is at the right hand of God. He sits at the right hand of the Father. As Christians we live for the eternal. We do not dedicate our energy to the temporary life in this body. Instead we dedicate ourselves to what is eternal and what will last forever. The highest priority for us now is God's word and the souls of men. There is no higher goal in life here on this earth.

We are dead and our life is hid with God. How do we make sense of this? Paul is speaking in the present tense! How can I at this moment, right now, be dead? This body is dead. It died with Jesus on the cross. I cannot enter the eternal with this dead body. God will one day resurrect this dead body but it will be completely changed and made into a new body which will live forever. But right now I am dead. My existence in this body is temporary but my spirit will live forever with the Lord. My real life is currently hidden from me because it is with God. But one day I will see that real life which I have with God.

When will I see my real life? It will appear when Jesus Christ comes back. This is why the return of Jesus Christ should be the highest and most passionate desire for any Christian. When Jesus returns we will get a new body like his body. We will be changed and our mortal body will be swallowed up by the life of an eternal body. Hallelujah!

3:5-10

Paul listed attitudes and sinful actions to remove completely from our life. I've heard people say they do not preach the message of "don't drink, don't smoke", but it appears this is exactly the kind of message Paul was preaching here. There is definitely a time when preachers need to tell people what to stop doing and what to start doing. We need to correct one another. We need to help others to quit behavior which does not line up with the life of a Christian. Some people need to be taught to quit being covetous, greedy, and sexual immoral.

Notice Paul talked about the wrath of God coming on people. The people he pinpointed were called "children of disobedience". Who are these people? It is not difficult to figure this out. Children of disobedience are those who do not believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. There might be religious people in this category but they do not have a genuine relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. How can you tell if a person is a real Christian? Jesus said we can know people by the fruit in their lives. Simple and direct but this is too much for some people to understand.

Do not live like the people upon whom the wrath of God abides. Why do we want to live like the world? People make up excuses so they can live like the world. They pretend that they live like the world in order to win the world. They do not realize that the only way an unbeliever can know who a Christian is is for the Christian to live a different life. People are not inspired to become a Christian because of worldly, sentimental, or emotional love. What brings people to salvation? It is seeing something radically different in Christians and then being convicted in their conscience. A true Christian really does live a different kind of lifestyle. He does not live like an unbeliever. He does not engage in the same kind of behavior, he does not say the same things, he does not tell the same jokes, and he does not hang out at the same places as the unbeliever. He does not have an intimate, emotional relationship with an unbeliever.

Scripture which helps confirm what I am saying: Read **Ephesians 5:6-11, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18**.

Once we put off the old man then we must put on the new man. The new man is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to do this we must be filled with the Holy Spirit. There will be no success in putting on the new man if we are not filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the new man and we must be filled with the Holy Spirit on a consistent basis. Pray and ask the Lord to fill you with the Holy Spirit. He promised that he would answer this prayer.

The new man is completely different from the old man. To get a picture of what the new man looks like read the fruits of the Spirit in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

3:11-15

In the church we are not defined by culture or ethnic or religious background or heritage. Men are defined by the Lord Jesus Christ. A Christian is "in" Christ so he can no longer define himself by worldly categories such as race, culture, or language. In Christ Jesus we become one people of God.

Act in accordance with this fact by showing love, kindness, humility, mercy, and patience toward brothers and sisters in Christ. Forgive people in the same way Christ forgave us. God forgives us unconditionally because of what the Lord Jesus did for us at Calvary. We are not above the Lord Jesus. We are his servants. Follow his example and forgive others. Love people unconditionally and with no strings attached. Love binds us all together perfectly.

Let God's peace rule in our heart. We are the one body of Jesus Christ. Let us be thankful.

These are important scriptures to meditate upon, memorize, and put into practice in our relationships with other Christians.

3:16-17

It is important as Christians to have God's word in our heart. This means taking time to read, study, memorize, and meditate on scripture.

When the Lord Jesus defeated Satan's temptations he did so by quoting from scriptures. Therefore we can learn that in order for us to overcome temptation we must have God's word in memory.

This was never more real to me than when I was a young Christian. Every day I stood on God's promises in his word to make it through a Christian rehab program. Some important verses that helped me at that time in my life were **Philippians 4:13, Philippians 1:6, James 4:7, and 1 Corinthians 10:13**.

These are just a few verses which I learned in the first months I was saved. Just these verses, quoted to myself or out loud, enabled me to endure an experience which was harder than going through Army boot camp.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

3:18-25

The Bible shows us how each member of a family is to live with one another. God has a design and an order for the family, and when we live according to God's plan and order then we will all be the happiest we could possibly be. God loves us and he knows what is best for us. He gives us his word and these verses are plain to understand. If we live according to what these verses tell us then we will have a godly family filled with the joy of the Lord.

Notice in verse 23 that whatever we do we should do it with all of our heart as working for the Lord and not for men. This is a Bible verse I learned when I was first saved. It means that as a Christian the quality of my life and work should always be my best. I am working for the Lord and not just men. I regret that I have not always applied this to my life. There were times when I worked just for men and my quality of work showed it.

There is no respect of persons with God. There is no favoritism. God will be fair to every person. Christians will have their works examined by the Lord. The Lord will inspect our life's work. We are not saved by doing good works but good works show we are saved. Let us work every day like we believe God is watching because he really is watching us.

Seasoned With Salt – Colossians 4

4:1-4

The first verse seems to go with the previous chapter when discussing relationships in the family and work relationships.

Moving on to verse 2 there is an emphasis on prayer. Praying and giving thanks go together. Our prayers should always be filled with thanksgiving to God for his blessings and for his control over our lives. To continue in prayer means to make it a life practice to daily find the time to pray and talk to the Lord. It points to a life of regular devotions in prayer, in reading God's word, and in praising the Lord.

Paul requested prayers for himself that he would have opportunities to preach the gospel. He knew he was a prisoner because he was a preacher and so as a prisoner he hoped for the chance to preach. He asked for prayer so that he would be effective in his preaching.

Praying and preaching go together. Intercession and proclamation go hand in hand. The work of the priest and the work of the prophet work together to bring people the saving knowledge of King Jesus.

4:5-6

Who were those "without"? The obvious answer was those outside the house of faith. Paul said to be wise with unbelievers. He added "redeeming the time". Paul taught Christians to take advantage of opportunities to share our faith with unbelievers.

Our speech should be with grace and seasoned with salt. This reminds me of what Jesus said. He said we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Our lives are in contrast with the world around us. The world system and the people who follow the spirit of this world system are passing away. Christians, however, follow the Holy Spirit and will inherit a kingdom which will never pass away. Our lives are built on an eternal foundation. How should this affect the way we live and how we speak?

I'm convinced one of the main reasons people are angry, petty, and selfish is because they know time is running out. They are afraid of death and are attempting to extract as much "living" from every moment they possibly can. Unbelievers almost believe it is an obligation to live as selfishly as possible and experience as much of the world as they can while alive. They have no hope for life beyond the grave. They are therefore in bondage and slaves to self-worship because of the fear and certainty that their "time" is running out.

Christians can be selfless and lay down their lives because they know they will live forever. Therefore our conversation is not filled with pettiness, wrath, anger, cursing, deceit, malice, or lying. We don't have to pretend anything. We are straightforward, wholehearted, and sincere in our life and our speech. This makes a deep impression on unbelievers, as it should.

Redeeming the time means we use our time for the purpose of promoting the gospel so others can be saved. We are not afraid of losing "our" time, but we are concerned that we use the time we have to glorify God by being a living testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4:7-18

These final verses remind me of how important people are. The church is people. Paul knew a lot of people by name, where they were, where they were going, where they came from, and what they were doing. He was like a people coordinator in the early church. I think this is a picture of what the Lord Jesus said about his disciples: "The world will know you are my disciples by your love for one another."

It is evident Paul loved these people. He invested in them, not only the gospel, but his own soul as well. He poured out his life for them. This is the example set before us as Christians.

Are we willing to lay down our lives for the brethren? Are we willing to be humble and wash the feet of the saints? Are we willing to sit down and break bread and commune with brothers and sisters in Christ?

Verse 17 stands out to me. Take the ministry you have received from the Lord and fulfill it! The only way we can do this is by staying in God's word and staying in prayer. There is no other way to be filled with the Spirit and fulfill our ministry. We must stay close to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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